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17 FEB 1956

ER 7-9433

Original Copy signed by D/DCI is filed

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Foreign Language Development Program

This memorandum contains recommendations submitted for DCI approval. Such recommendations are contained in paragraph 5.

1. PROBLEM:

To develop a program which will meet current Agency requirements for competence in foreign languages and will build a reserve of Agency personnel competent in foreign languages for which there may be, at any future time, an Agency requirement.

2. FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM:

a. The Central Intelligence Agency faces a constantly growing need for staff personnel proficient in one or more foreign languages.

b. The immeasurable scope of future responsibilities places upon the Agency an immediate need to provide, in advance, a reserve of staff personnel one or more of whom are proficient in any foreign language which may be related to future Agency responsibilities.

c. The Director has repeatedly and recently expressed his very great interest in expanding the language competence of Agency personnel and as a matter of principle his desire to provide "incentive pay" for development of language competence by individuals.

3. DISCUSSION:

a. Annex A discusses the several aspects of the problem, including

Section A: The language problem,
Section B: The incentive awards program,
Section C: Considerations relating to implementation of this paper and requiring special attention.

b. Annex B is a suggested Schedule of Awards to be used in the event that it is determined monetary awards will be made.

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4. CONCLUSIONS:

a. A comprehensive Foreign Language Development Program is essential to meet current and future Agency requirements for an adequate number of staff personnel proficient in foreign languages. The essential requirements of such a program are:

(1) The reiteration of the command responsibility of each Deputy Director to determine current and future language requirements for the full discharge of his responsibilities and to take all necessary and proper steps to assure the continuing attainment and maintenance of language proficiency by staff personnel under his jurisdiction.

(2) The provision of incentive, in the form of monetary awards to Career Staff personnel to attain and/or maintain defined standards of workable proficiency in one or more foreign languages.

(3) The provision of adequate facilities, both within and without the Agency, to permit qualified staff personnel to attain and maintain proficiency, regardless of the specific language requirements of their positions.

(4) The selection of a limited number of Career Staff personnel having exceptional qualifications for intensive training to develop proficiency in difficult, unusual, or short-supply languages for which a requirement may develop.

(5) The establishment of a register of the foreign language competence of all staff personnel having language competence, based upon uniform standard tests, in order readily to identify those individuals competent to meet a specific Agency language requirement.

(6) The expansion and strengthening of the existing foreign language proficiency testing program to meet the added requirements of both an incentive program and the establishment of a register.

b. The incentive awards program should contain the following policies:

(1) Awards should be granted only for effort resulting in achievement and/or maintenance of workable language proficiency, following effective date of the program.

(2) Only Career Staff personnel should be eligible for award.

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(3) Excluded from awards in the language(s) concerned should be native speakers and individuals whose grade and compensation are determined by their level and type of language proficiency.

(4) Only proficiency which is workable and useable should be awarded; that is, comprehensive proficiency at intermediate and high levels and specialized proficiency at high levels only, as determined by foreign language proficiency tests.

(5) Amount of awards should range from $50 to $800 depending on difficulty of language, and degree and type of proficiency, providing achievement awards only once and maintenance awards at intervals of twelve months, at 50% of the achievement rate.

(6) For purposes of incentive award and of building the Agency reserve, the opportunity should be offered to all qualified staff personnel to use the Agency's normal language training program, both internally and at external facilities to achieve proficiency; maintenance of proficiency, however, should be a personal responsibility at no expense to the Agency. Existing internal facilities may be used.

(7) To build a small reserve of highly proficient personnel in all languages of probable future significance to intelligence, a limited number of Career Staff personnel, with exceptional qualifications, should be selected for intensive training in designated languages.

(8) No distinction in awards should be made for proficiency based on command training as against voluntary individual effort.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended:

a. That conclusions in paragraph 4 be approved.

b. That advice concerning the legality for the payment of monetary awards be sought from the Comptroller General.

c. That the Deputy Director (Support) be directed to implement the Foreign Language Development Program.

[redacted]

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Chairman, ad hoc Committee on
Foreign Language Development Program

Attachment

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SUBJECT: Foreign Language Development Program

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CONCUR:
[redacted]
Acting Director of Training

Date 17 FEB 1956

Concur:

/s/ Lyman Kirkpatrick
Acting Chairman, CIA Career Council

Date 17 FEB 1956

Concur:

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[redacted]
Deputy Director (Support)

Date FEB 20 1956

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[redacted]
DDCI

2 March 1956

The recommendations in paragraph 5 are approved: (Provided no payment of monetary awards is made until approval to do so is received from the Comptroller General.)

Allen W. Dulles
Director of Central Intelligence

Date

Distribution:
O&l - DD/S
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Annex A

DISCUSSION

A. THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM

1. There is no Agency policy that dictates the determination of requirements for language competence of staff personnel to perform current assignments or to assume probable future assignments, and that assures continuing attainment and maintenance of language proficiency by staff personnel adequate for such assignments.

2. The pressure to get the job done along with the lack of personnel has prevented development of necessary competences, either for current assignments or for building a reserve to meet unforeseeable future needs.

3. Varying degrees and types of language competence are required. These must be developed in advance of need. Development of the minimum workable competence requires from 5 months to several years of full-time training and continuous use, or the equivalent; and full proficiency requires from one year to three years full-time, depending upon the difficulty of the language.

4. There is no authorization, under current policy or regulation, to permit Agency-sponsored language training:

a. not directly related to the current or prospective duty assignment,

b. over and above the requirements of duty assignment, to contribute to development of full proficiency,

c. in unusual, difficult or short-supply languages of probable future significance to intelligence, without reference to duty assignment, to build a reserve.

5. There is, at present, no effort incentive for personnel to develop language proficiency, either related to the current job or to building of a reserve for future use.

6. The Agency does not at present know the nature and extent of its language competences. There is no reliable inventory of existing competence of staff personnel to meet requirements of a particular assignment or problem requiring foreign language.

7. There is an existing small language proficiency testing program, administered by OTR, which is developing objective, standard measurement tests of individual proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and comprehending foreign languages, but submission to testing is primarily voluntary.

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8. The weaknesses of the present situation, in short, are that there is no provision for adequate:

a. identification of current requirements

b. identification of existing competences

c. meeting of current requirements for language competences

d. development of a reserve of competences to meet future requirements

e. encouragement to individuals to develop greater competence either for the current assignment or as a contribution to the reserve.

9. In order to correct the inadequacies of the present situation and meet the objective of the Director, the following six steps may be considered:

a. To establish a register of the foreign language competence of all staff personnel having language competence, based upon uniform standard tests, in order to ascertain existing competences and readily to identify those individuals competent to meet a specific Agency language requirement.

b. To reiterate the command responsibility of each Deputy Director to determine current and future language requirements for the full discharge of his responsibilities and to take all necessary and proper steps to assure the continuing attainment and maintenance of language proficiency by staff personnel under his jurisdiction.

c. To provide incentive, in the form of monetary awards, to Career Staff personnel to attain and/or maintain defined standards of workable proficiency in one or more foreign languages.

d. To provide adequate facilities, both within and without the Agency, to permit qualified staff personnel to attain and maintain proficiency, regardless of the specific language requirements of their positions.

e. To select a limited number of Career Staff personnel having exceptional qualifications for intensive training to develop proficiency in difficult, unusual, or short-supply languages for which a requirement may develop.

f. To expand and strengthen the existing foreign language proficiency testing program to meet requirements of both an incentive program and the establishment of a register.

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8. INCENTIVE AWARDS PROGRAM

A number of factors requiring policy determination exist in terms of an incentive program, as:

1. purpose of the program
2. starting date of program
3. who is eligible for award
4. level and/or type of proficiency to be awarded
5. amount of awards
6. distinction in awards based on command training as against voluntary individual effort.

These factors are discussed below.

1. Purpose of the Program.

a. A fundamental consideration is the purpose of an incentive awards program. Stated in its simplest terms, is it

(1) to award Agency employees for effort as Agency employees resulting in acquisition and/or maintenance of language proficiency at defined levels, or

(2) to pay Agency employees for possession of language proficiency, at defined levels, no matter however or whenever acquired?

b. The committee unanimously supports the first alternative: that an incentive awards program should encourage Agency personnel to develop language competence and to contribute to development of a reserve of personnel competent to meet current and future Agency requirements. The award is an incentive to individual effort to improve competence and/or maintain competence for use by the Agency.

c. The alternative position does not in itself provide an incentive, but is a bonus for possession of proficiency, rather than for effort within the Agency.

d. The cost in awards under an incentive-for-effort policy would be substantially less than under a bonus-for-possession policy. Based on available records, about 2,000 Agency personnel have proficiency at native

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or advanced levels, which would immediately entitle them to a bonus for possession; this cost would not represent effort or development of Agency language resources, but would be an annual cost in addition to the cost of awards for effort and development of proficiency by Agency personnel.

e. The administration of a bonus-for-possession policy would be comparatively easy. Only a test would be required to determine possession of proficiency. However, the administration of an incentive-for-effort policy, if effective now, would not be much more difficult.

f. The purpose of an incentive awards program, including considerations of equity, administration, and cost, is closely related to considerations of when the program should start (discussed below).

2. Starting Date of Program.

a. One view, and the unanimous view of the committee, is that the incentive award program should start as of now, for effort at developing and/or maintaining fluency following effective date of the program. As a basis for measurement, as well as for the register, language competences of staff personnel as now existent should be established by means of foreign language proficiency tests, and recorded in a register for use to meet assignments requiring such competence. Staff personnel, with existing proficiency no matter how or when obtained, would not be eligible for award for achievement of current proficiency, but only for achievement of proficiency at a higher level or for maintenance of proficiency at the same level, as determined by annual foreign language proficiency tests. The award for achievement and/or maintenance of proficiency would be for the effort involved therein, and as an effort incentive to achieve and/or maintain proficiency for use in the Agency.

b. Any other view presents almost insuperable problems of administration and increased cost, as well as a program retroactive in effect.

3. Who is Eligible for Award.

a. Career Staff personnel (staff employees and staff agents) are the only assets which in actual fact are available for establishment of a truly long-term language proficiency reserve for the Agency. Only individuals who have chosen CIA as a career, and been accepted as such, represent a dependable potential for the Agency's language reserve. It is felt, therefore, that only Career Staff personnel should be eligible for awards.

b. Staff personnel, who have been with the Agency less than three years and prior to membership in the Career Staff, who are properly qualified in accordance with established standards and procedures,

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should be offered opportunity to make use of the Agency language training program, both internal and at external facilities, in order to develop proficiency which would build their language competence. They might then qualify for award following their membership in the Career Staff.

c. Native speakers (foreign residents for most of their first 15 years) should not be eligible for award in the language(s) concerned, since their proficiency is already obtained, and no effort is involved in their maintenance of proficiency at the highest level. An award, therefore, would be a bonus rather than a recognition of effort, and therefore should not be allowed. Such personnel are not discriminated against, in that they may qualify for awards in other languages, and thereby also contribute to development of the reserve.

d. Another exception to eligibility for awards should be those individuals whose grade and compensation are determined by the type and level of their language proficiency (as, for example, many persons in FBID, who are paid for their ability to read, persons in FBIS who are paid for their aural comprehension, language instructors in OTR, etc.). These persons are already being paid for the language competence they possess, and an award would constitute a bonus and double pay for the proficiency they possess. Such personnel are not discriminated against, since they have the incentive of training opportunity and award to develop full proficiency in languages in which they are only partially competent, or for developing proficiency in languages for which they are not specifically paid and so qualify for award.

e. The one possible inequitable discrimination not avoided by the program is against the person who is denied use of the Agency's training facilities because of his inability to meet prevailing standards for approval, including aptitude, motivation, and other considerations which indicate a reasonable expectation of attaining a workable level of proficiency. Such a person might then, without Agency assistance, develop competence adequate to qualify for an award. Although he may qualify and receive award and is not discriminated against in this regard, he presumably has learned the language at personal expense, having been denied the Agency's facilities. The Committee recognizes this discrimination and inequity, but believes that instances of its occurrence will be so extremely rare, if at all, that it does not seem necessary to provide for it.

4. Level and Type of Proficiency to be Awarded.

a. There is a question concerning whether awards should be made at varying defined levels of proficiency: for proficiency that is comprehensive (reading, writing, speaking, and understanding) or for proficiency that is less than comprehensive (as reading only, or speaking only).

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b. Either position is supportable in the light of the overall objective of building language competences and of establishing a language reserve. The question is whether it is more desirable to develop:

(1) A reserve of qualified balanced language officers competent in a comprehensive manner and capable for all tasks, or

(2) A reserve of language officers qualified in one or more facilities only, such as reading or speaking, and able to meet only specialized, limited requirements.

c. Three basic differences in result are involved. Providing awards for only balanced, comprehensive proficiency would: (a) encourage the development of individuals capable of meeting any type of language needs, (b) greatly limit the number of persons who would qualify, and (c) be comparatively inexpensive. The alternative would not in itself necessarily ensure the development of qualified, versatile language officers. It would, however, attract many more persons to develop specialized though limited competence (as in reading only). It would cost more than the alternative.

d. The Committee unanimously proposes a combination of the two.

e. The gradation of awards, by providing awards for specialized competence only at a high level, but for comprehensive competence at both intermediate and high levels, would encourage development of qualified balanced language officers, and also award persons who develop a high level of specialized proficiency.

5. Amount of Awards.

a. The range of awards is subject to varying views. It is believed, however, that the suggested range is realistic and equitable. It is agreed that awards should not be excessive; yet they need to be sufficiently substantial to provide real incentive. The schedule of awards below would meet the requirements of being moderate and incentive.

b. Two basic principles should control the granting of awards:

(1) Awards should be granted for effort to acquire and/or maintain proficiency, and not for mere possession thereof.

(2) Awards should be granted for proficiency not less than adequate to permit effective, even though perhaps limited, workable use in some Agency activity wherein language is a requisite.

c. Persons may qualify for an Achievement Award at each level only once, but thereafter may qualify at least once every twelve months for maintenance awards.

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d. Awards shown in the table represent amounts to be paid for reaching the qualifying level from the immediately lower level; a person advancing from no knowledge of the language to High Proficiency (comprehensive) would receive the total of the amounts for High and Intermediate Proficiency (comprehensive).

e. Schedule of Awards (see following page).

f. Definitions. The amounts of awards are significant only in relation to the quality of performance required and described below. The schedule of awards is based on an estimate of the comparative effort required of individuals to attain and maintain defined proficiency in different languages. The amount of awards is based entirely on relative difficulty of the languages, not on needs of the Agency. Control of awards in relation to the needs of the Agency should be accomplished by periodical issue of a list of languages designated as within this program. Such languages would be designated by the Director of Training, in consultation with persons from other components, and in consideration of the language requirements of the Agency as well as of the register of existing competences and the numbers of persons in training. Once a person has become a candidate to qualify in a designated language, and is in approved training, his eligibility to qualify should not be affected by removal of this language from the list prior to his qualifying, nor once having qualified, should he be prevented from receiving maintenance awards.

(1) High Proficiency (comprehensive): Ability to read, speak, write, and understand at a high level of performance; ability to function freely in the language in non-technical matters, at the level of the educated native, with a high degree of accuracy. This is the quality of proficiency that it is expected would require a person of average aptitude the time indicated below, plus 3-6 months of active use of the language among foreign populations, for each language group to acquire.

	Formal Study, Full-Time	Formal Study, Typical Part-Time
Language Group 1	9 mos. + 3 mos. use	6- 8 years
Language Group 2	15 mos. + 3-6 mos. use	10-12 years
Language Group 3	18 mos. + 3-6 mos. use	12-15 years
Language Group 4	30 mos. + 6 or more mos.	20-25 years (if at all)

(2) Intermediate Proficiency (comprehensive): Ability to read, speak, write, and understand at moderate speed with a high degree of accuracy. This includes basic familiarity with the structure of the language, proficiency in speaking to conduct routine business and to handle

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freely normal social-travel situations, and ability to read newspapers with the aid of a dictionary. This is the quality of proficiency that it is expected would require a person of average aptitude the time indicated below for each Language Group to acquire.

	Formal Study, Full-Time	Formal Study, Typical Part-Time
Language Group 1	5 months	4- 5 years
Language Group 2	9 months	7- 8 years
Language Group 3	12 months	8-10 years
Language Group 4	18 months	12-15 years

(3) Specialized Proficiency: Ability to read, or speak at a high level of performance (as described for High Proficiency (comprehensive), above).

c. In comparison with the recommended awards, the British provide tax-free grants for acquiring proficiency varying from £100 to £150 ($280-$420), and taxable bonus pay where in assignments using the language varying from £27.7.6 to £36.17.6 (about $76-$103). The Russian system provides bonuses varying from 5-20% annually of basic salary.

6. Distinction in Awards.

a. An incentive program consisting both of awards and the opportunity for training leads to the question whether any distinction in amount of awards should be made between persons who learn languages at Agency expense and time or persons who may learn languages at their own expense and time.

b. In pursuit of the Director's objective, an effort to establish a distinction is regarded as academic; for it is believed essential, if the program is to be appreciably productive, that the Agency provide every reasonable facility to individuals desiring to contribute to development of the Agency's language competence. They should not only be offered the Agency's training facilities but should be encouraged to use them to the fullest extent that their regular duties permit. The incentive without the facility, in terms of time and training, will not achieve the end desired. While it is recognized that many persons may not be permitted official time to participate in this program, in broad, general terms, the rate and quality of development toward the objective will be closely related to the degree of use that individuals may make of Agency time and facilities.

c. Realistic approach to the objective of the Director, therefore, dictates provision by the Agency of its language training facilities as an incentive, as well as of monetary award. Substantial realization of this objective cannot be expected from individuals endeavoring to qualify for awards on their own time, regardless of whether or not the costs

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are personal. The amount of time required to develop workable, usable proficiency on personal time (cf. para 5f, above) means that a program aimed to build a language reserve for the Agency largely by individuals studying on personal time simply would not be sufficiently productive to be worthwhile. The individual who must, or is willing to work on his own time should not be discouraged, but the program should not seek to attain its objective primarily through these individuals. Moreover, it is deemed essential that, as a practical element, as well as incentive, the Agency must provide the opportunity (in terms of internal training and controlled external training) for persons developing language competence. Furthermore, the cost to the individual desiring to qualify for the levels of proficiency described above would be so great as to nullify the inducement of the proffered award.

d. Whether or not the individual takes language training by command or voluntarily, during or after the hours of business--he will have to spend a great deal of personal time (not compensable as overtime) to achieve any workable or awardable proficiency. Since all qualified persons should with prior approval (based on aptitude, proposed training program and proposed language) be sponsored by the Agency for training either internal or external, there is no valid basis for making distinction in amount of award.

e. For these reasons it is felt that no distinction should be made with reference to whether the acquisition of fluency is at Agency or personal expense and/or time.

f. It follows, therefore, that qualified persons should be encouraged fullest use of the Agency language training program. Even if duty assignments preclude voluntary language training on official time, those desiring to study on their own time and satisfying normal standards for Agency sponsored training should be financed by the Agency for approved training.

g. Pursuant to the foregoing conclusions, it is felt by the Committee that all staff personnel should have the opportunity to apply, IN ADVANCE, to take advantage of the Agency's training program, internal or external. Persons must meet standards established by the DTR, as authorized in CIA Regulation 25-410, must apply for training in approved, established training programs, and must apply for training in a language(s) on the list of languages designated by the DTR as included in this program. Specifically excluded from available facilities should be all informal, non-academic programs, travel, commercial schools and tutorial services. Opportunities for training under this program should be limited by availability of existing approved programs. While programs for groups might be specially created, normally creation of special programs for individuals would not be authorized as part of this program. Moreover, whereas external training at Agency expense might be authorized for

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development of proficiency, normally maintenance should be regarded as a personal responsibility. Employees maintaining proficiency could take advantage of the several internal activities conducted for this purpose, but any expenses for maintenance should be met by awards or other personal funds.

h. Any staff personnel taking advantage of the Agency's internal facilities and failing to demonstrate satisfactory development of competence should be dropped from training. Any personnel receiving financial aid for external training should be required to submit himself at least once a year for examination, and if it is felt that his progress is less than average for the type of training, Agency financing of his training should be terminated.

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C. CONSIDERATIONS

1. Conduct of this program cannot be divorced from personnel requirements for its success. These requirements relate both to the administration and conduct of the program and to participation. In adoption of the program some consideration should be given to these requirements identified, insofar as possible, below.

a. Development and maintenance of the register by the Office of Personnel presumably would impose an additional clerical, if not professional burden upon that Office.

b. Development of the Proficiency Testing Program at a rate required to meet the needs of the Foreign Language Development Program would require professional and clerical augmentation of the present staff of one staff employee and one occasional consultant now developing the program.

c. Active response to the program could significantly increase the need for OTR to provide more training, to provide more intensive training, and to provide training in languages not now taught.

d. Provisions should be made so that (1) all components of the Agency affected by the responsibility placed upon Deputy Directors to ensure language competence where required may comply by assignment of personnel to training where required without decreasing necessary capability to perform assigned responsibilities, and (2) persons selected for training directed toward development of the reserve may have all reasonable opportunity to participate in the best available training.

e. As presently conceived, in modest proportions, the selection semi-annually of six persons of outstanding promise for development as language officers need not create any expense not presently provided for, on assumption that such persons can be considered, according to prevailing criteria, for career development slots. Should the Agency desire, however, to develop the reserve more rapidly, some provision of special slots for this language specialists development might be desirable.

2. Two general types of expenses would be required for the program: funds for awards, and funds for such training as might be authorized at external facilities.

a. Cost of awards is difficult to estimate in advance. This would depend on the extent of response stimulated by the program, and practice of standards of quality performance that are deemed essential if this program is truly to develop a reserve of workable language competence, as distinct from being a "give-away" program for exertion of relatively little effort. It is anticipated that very few persons will

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qualify for High Proficiency (comprehensive) awards, and in the more difficult languages it will be several years before any persons will qualify. A good many people should be able to qualify for Intermediate Proficiency (comprehensive) and Specialized Proficiency awards. If, for example, two persons in each language group (8 persons) qualified for High Proficiency (comprehensive) (cost $3,520), ten persons in each language group (40 persons) qualified for Intermediate or Specialized (cost $8,800), "achievement awards" would cost $12,320 a year. Thereafter, if all 48 persons qualify annually for maintenance awards, the annual cost for these would be $7,160. Over a period of ten years, the total cost of awards would amount to about $450,000, and the number of persons who would receive awards because of achievement and maintenance of workable proficiency would be 480.

b. Likewise, it is also impossible to estimate the costs of external training that might seem appropriate. For the most part, where the numbers of people involved are sufficient to make internal training economical, it is felt that training should be provided internally. Expense for external training then should be for that training which cannot be more economically provided internally because of numbers of students or unusualness of the language, or (in the absence of an Agency-conducted night school) for persons whose duties prevent their training during the working day.

3. Development of administration that is equitable for persons who maintain fluency while overseas presents a special situation. It will be feasible to provide testing only at Headquarters. In those cases where persons have established a record of proficiency at any of the recognized levels and, on return to Headquarters, demonstrate maintenance of fluency, it is proposed that maintenance awards be granted retroactively for each 12-month period from the date on which the person established his proficiency. Achievement awards, however, would not be made retroactively, but only at time achievement is established by proficiency test.

4. The senior representative of the General Counsel on the Committee advises that the legal question of the authority of the Director of Central Intelligence, under sections 10A and 10B of Public Law 110, 81st Congress, to approve a program providing incentive awards for language proficiency is unsettled, and is still under consideration by the Office of the General Counsel.

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